

08.24.11 - ROSCOE - RICHLAND, MS - RANKIN CNTY

Wednesday, June 06, 2012 11:08 PM



**FACEBOOK: REMEMBER ROSCOE HARRISON**

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Remember-Roscoe-Harrison/210840375641469>



**Harrison et al v. City of Richland, Mississippi et al | 3:13-cv-00546-HTW-LRA**

Defendant: City of Richland, Mississippi, W. R. James, James Chatham and Does 1-10  
Plaintiff: Adam Harrison and John Harrison

Case Number: 3:2013cv00546

Filed: September 6, 2013

Court: Mississippi Southern District Court

Office: Jackson Office

County: Rankin

Referring Judge: Linda R. Anderson

Presiding Judge: Henry T. Wingate

Nature of Suit: Other Civil Rights

Cause of Action: 42:1983

Jury Demanded By: Plaintiff

<http://dockets.justia.com/docket/mississippi/mssdce/3:2013cv00546/83156>



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**3:13-cv-00546-HTW-LRA-DOCKET-COMPLAINT**



3-13-cv-005

46-HTW-L...

<https://archive.org/details/313Cv00546HTWLRA COMPLAINTDOCKET>

## **OVERVIEW:**

### **John Harrison**

I'm John Harrison. My GSD, "Roscoe" (Remember Roscoe Harrison) was shot and killed by the Richland Mississippi Police Dept on August 24th, 2011.

### **About**

Please help Roscoe and his family, they need everyone to come together and let it be known that our pets are family, and we don't agree with the murder of our family members.

### **Mission**

Our mission is to raise awareness of the indefensible actions that the Richland Police Dept encourages and calls "justified"

### **Description**

This memorial page is dedicated to one who, as Lord Byron aptly stated long ago "possessed beauty without vanity, Strength without insolence, Courage without ferocity, and all the Virtues of Man, with none of his vices." This praise, which would be unmeaning flattery if inscribed over human memory, is but a just tribute to the Memory Rosco, a dog, my dog.

### **General Information**

The Richland Police Dept shot and killed our dog Roscoe Share this page and article with your friends, family, or anyone you feel like. Tell the world. We will have justice.

### **The Clarion Ledger-**

Controversy swirls around whether a Richland police officer was justified in shooting a family pet after receiving a complaint about a vicious dog.

Police were called to Richland East Circle when a dog allegedly growled and showed his teeth to some neighbors Wednesday night, Police Chief Russel James.

An officer shot the dog after it became aggressive and rushed several officers when its owner stepped outside his home around 8:40 p.m.

"The dog posed a serious threat," James said.

But John Harrison, the dog's owner, and his son, Adam, tell a different story about Rosco. They say the 4-year-old German shepherd was under their carport waiting to come inside when officers arrived at their home.

Adam Harrison said Rosco was cowering in the corner by the door with his ears back when he looked outside.

"When his ears were down, that meant he was scared," Adam Harrison said.

He said as he opened the door, it hit Rosco causing the dog to bolt toward the officers, who had spotlights and guns aimed at the dog.

"It looked like they brought out the SWAT team to take down a bear," he said.

By the time he reached the edge of the carport, Adam Harrison said the dog was about 10 feet away from police and they fired.

John Harrison pointed out that his son was in the line of fire, as were two other people sitting inside the house.

Adam Harrison said he took the dog into the kitchen and attempted to stop the bleeding, then repeatedly asked officers to move their cars so he could take Rosco to a veterinarian.

At one point, he said one of the officers said to him, "We can drag him back outside and put another bullet in his head and end this s---."

When the officer that shot the dog wanted to go and retrieve the animal control vehicle, Adam Harrison said the same officer asked why he wanted to get blood all over the new truck.

Animal control arrived about 45 minutes after the shooting, the Harrisons said.

Rosco died en route, police said. But Adam Harrison said his dog was dead in the kitchen.

"There was blood everywhere," said John Harrison, a paramedic. "I'm used to blood, and I really had a hard time with it."

While the Harrisons understand why the officers could be frightened, they said they don't understand why the situation escalated.

The Harrisons said Rosco, who loved Cheetos and tuna fish, had slipped the fence for only the second time in four years.

Neighbors should have recognized Rosco because they spent a lot of time outdoors with him, the dog owners said.

Emily Stevens, 16, who lives on the same street, said around dark she noticed a dog she didn't recognize in her neighbor's yard.

"I tried to go catch it, and it wouldn't let me catch it, and it kinda growled at me, so I called the cops to come get it," Stevens said.

The Harrisons said about five officers responded to the call. The chief said the number was three.

"(Rosco's) instinct was to defend his home," John Harrison said. "But the important thing is that he was waiting by the door trying to get into the house when they got here and cornered him and put the spotlights in his eyes. It's almost like there was no other outcome possible."

Lori Barnhart, a family friend, said her dogs Chaos, a German shepherd, and Mongo, a pit bull, would play with Rosco when the families got together and they never had a problem.

"Rosco was a very sweet, good-natured dog. John could take him anywhere," she said. "He was good around kids and loved everyone. If Rosco showed any type of aggression, he was only scared and protecting his family at his home. Any dog would do the same."

But James said his officer was justified in the shooting. If a child had entered the carport, it could have been disastrous if Rosco's reaction had been the same, he said.

"We hate it for the owners, and we even tried to transport the dog," he said. "But I believe he

(the officer) used good judgment."

John Harrison said he wishes he could have done something to help save his friend.

"Our dogs are there to protect us and for us to protect," he said. "When we can't protect them, we've failed them."

"I just wish I'd have had the chance to help him."

John Harrison, about his dog Roscoe

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Remember-Roscoe-Harrison/210840375641469?sk=info>

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**[Q: IF ACO WAS AVAILABLE POST-INCIDENT, WHY WASN'T ACO DISPATCHED TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION IN THE 1ST PLACE?]**

→☆☆

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## **Chief: Officer shot dog because of serious threat**

Posted: Aug 26, 2011



RICHLAND, MS (WLBT) -

A family pet is dead in Richland after being shot by police. Was it necessary? It depends on whom you ask.

Several people posted on WLBT's Facebook page expressing anger over the shooting death of the German Shepard. The 4-year-old dog, named Roscoe, was shot once in the face Wednesday

night by a police officer at a house on Richland East Circle.

The dog's owner says Roscoe had managed to get out of a backyard fence. A neighbor called police saying a vicious dog was on the loose.

Adam Harrison said he saw five officers with weapons drawn as they walked onto the property.

Harrison admits his 95-pound dog responded aggressively.

"It escalated way too fast, and it happened the way it did," Harrison told WLBT News. "I don't blame the officer for being scared, but in the same sense, Roscoe was scared, too."

"It's terrible," said Richland Police Chief Russel James. "You never want to have to use your firearm in any way, and certainly you don't want to have to take an animal like that, and it's somebody's pet. But this is a dog that posed a serious threat to the community, and the officer did what he had to do."

Harrison's family is upset that Richland Animal Control officers showed up after the dog was shot. The city of Richland has a vicious-dog ordinance.

Roscoe was taken to a local veterinary hospital where he later died.

<http://www.wlbt.com/story/15339947/chief-officer-shot-dog-because>

### **German shepherd shot by police**

**Richland, MS** - A 4 yr-old German shepherd was shot and killed before his owner's very eyes on Wednesday.

The tragedy began when the dog slipped from his fenced yard - only the second time he had done so over the past four years.

While the dog, named Rosco, was out, he encountered a 16 yr-old girl who tried, unsuccessfully, to catch him.

In the process, Rosco growled.

A reaction not overly surprising - a stranger chasing a frightened dog in the dark could elicit a growl.

The growl prompted the girl to phone the police - who arrived en masse a short time later.

The officers who arrived claim that the dog rushed them - acting aggressively - and that their lethal shot was necessary.

The dog's owner, John Harrison, has a different version.

According to Harrison, his dog was huddled beneath the carport - waiting to come back inside of the house.

Harrison claims that when his son, Adam, exited the house, the door caused the dog to run

towards the officers, who had their guns trained on the dog.

Though the Harrisons rushed their seriously injured dog into the house in an effort to stem the flow of blood, their efforts failed and he died.

The family has many complaints about what happened - beyond their dog being shot by the officers, they allege that the officers refused to move their vehicles so that Rosco could be rushed to a vet clinic.

They also claim that one of the officers offered to shoot the dog again - to put him out of his misery. Rosco's owner alleges that the "offer" was not made out of kindness.

The Harrisons also wonder why the gun was discharged in the presence of Adam Harrison.

In so many of these stories which involve police officers shooting family pets, the glaring question remains - **why lethal force as a first option?**

Why aren't non-lethal options considered first?

Could the officers not wait for animal control to arrive? Does a gun always have to be the first choice?

Rosco's reaction towards strangers approaching his home, in the dark, was not unusual. German shepherds are protective of their home and family by their very nature.



**One would think (hope) that an officer would be aware that a frightened dog very well may bark, growl and show teeth.**

Of little surprise is the official response from the police department which was involved in the shooting - according to them, the officer's reaction was justified.

Rest in Peace Rosco.

LINK 1:

<http://www.clarionledger.com/article/20110826/NEWS/108260354/Dog-shooting-by-police-questioned>

LINK 2:

<http://www.examiner.com/article/german-shepherd-shot-by-police>